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The invention relates to an optical reading system comprising an optical reader and a host processor. In one aspect of the invention, the host processor may be configured to transmit a component control instruction in response to a user input command input by a user of the host processor to remotely control the reader. The optical reader subsequently receives the transmitted component control instruction and executes the component control instruction substantially on receipt thereof. In one embodiment, execution of the component control instruction by the optical reader has the same effect as the reader trigger being manually pulled by a reader operator.